

INDEPENDENT THINKING ON JEWISH PROBLEMS

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STATEMENT OF AIMS

The Jewish Newsletter aims to apply the principles of independence of thought and freedom of discussion to reporting and interpretation of news and views of Jewish interest.

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The Whip of Antisemitism

No other word in the English vocabulary has been more misused by foes and friends alike than the word "antisemitism." The greatest scourge of Jews through the centuries, the cause of antisemitism, like that of cancer, is still an enigma to the world at large and to most Jews. All they know with certainty is that through the centuries antisemitism has caused them untold suffering, pain, humiliation and persecution and that it has left an instinctive fear in their hearts out of which, like poisonous vapors from a swamp, have risen many more evils as well as many panaceas and messianic movements which have been plaguing Jews for ages.

Zionism itself was one of these movements. It came into existence for the primary purpose of solving the problem of antisemitism radically, once and for all. But it has made many other curious uses of the monster besides fighting it. Among these is the use of antisemitism as a whip over non-Jews who not only are not antisemites, but they abhor antisemitism.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, an important new development occurred. Many sensitive Christians all over Europe suddenly awoke to the realization that antisemitism was a problem of the non-Jews as well as of the Jews. This found expression in the humanitarian writings and acts of Zola, Tolstoi, Korolenko, Gorki and other great Christians and created a feeling of guilt among many kindly, liberal-minded non-Jews about the persecution of Jews. In the twentieth century, when antisemitism assumed the brutal forms which led up to the greatest Jewish tragedy in history, the feeling of guilt spread into a mass movement among Christians and resulted in many manifestations of humanitarianism, which saved the lives of scores of thousands of Jews during the Nazi rule. Since then, antisemitism has become abhorrent to many more decent Christians, who shun it like the plague.

The Zionists, aware of this new trend, took advantage of it as they did of other aspects of antisemitism. A famous Zionist poet once described antisemitism as the "Whip of God" with which He drives those Jews who do not want to leave their exile to their National Home. American Zionists seem to have discovered another use for the "Whip of God": to punish those Christians who refuse to join their bandwagon and particularly

those who criticize Israel. Such criticism is invariably described by the Zionist and pro-Zionist "defense agencies" as "a new type of antisemitism." Critics of Israel are either systematically attacked as outright antisemites, or subjected to a whispering campaign, which amounts to the same thing.

Smear in Action

A striking illustrations of this type of propaganda in action is found in two recent cases worthy of mention: a review of Miss Freda Utley's new book, "Will the Middle East Go West?" and a report on the Middle East by the Reverend L. R. Elson, Minister of the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C. The case of Miss Utley was called to public attention by Mr. Norman Thomas, internationally known American liberal and humanitarian, who is himself a victim of the same vicious propaganda and has been called "antisemitic" in the pages of the *Jewish Daily Forward*.

In a letter to the *New Leader* (January 27), Mr. Thomas protested against the *New Leader's* reviewer of Miss Utley's book, a pro-Zionist propagandist, who suggested that Miss Utley was moved by antisemitism because she criticizes the Israelis. This accusation was based on a plan Miss Utley advanced for peace in the Middle East, the main feature of which is, to use her own words, that "Israel should abandon her aim of 'Ingathering' of Jews from all over the world and thus allay the Arab fears that, with U. S. financial support, Israel will further expand her territory and expropriate and expel more millions of the original Arab inhabitants."

In his letter, Mr. Thomas said that the critic had every right to differ sharply with many of Miss Utley's opinions, but he added: "Surely, any fair-minded individual must agree that it is dangerous business to say that the Israeli Government is so immune to criticism that to criticize it is, of itself, proof of antisemitism."

Reverend Elson, who is minister of President Eisenhower's Church and a leader of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, working for good relations between the people of these faiths, in a speech delivered upon his return from a trip to the Middle East, emphasized the fact that he had found that the fear of Zionist expansionism in the area is greater than the fear of Communist expansionism and that the real danger is Zionism, not Communism. This called forth a rude attack by Dr. S. Margoshes,

editor of the *Zionist Journal-Tog*, who accused Reverend Elson of "distorting the facts" because he dared to compare Zionism with Communism and because he did not say a word about the "groundlessness of the Arab fears of the so-called Zionist expansionism." The attack strongly implied that Reverend Elson was anti-Israel and, *ipso facto*, anti-Jewish.

The significance of these incidents becomes clearer when they are seen not as isolated events but as steps in a well organized pressure campaign, extending over a period of years, to smear every critic of Israel and of Zionism as an antisemite, or as a suspect of antisemitism. An enumeration of a few of the more famous victims of this campaign in recent years will illustrate this point. These include: Professor Arnold Toynbee; Norman Thomas; Dorothy Thompson; Dean Virginia Eldersleee; Professor William Ernest Hoeking; the well known foreign correspondent, Howard K. Smith; Dr. Edith Summerskill, British Member of Parliament and many others. (The "antisemites" H. G. Wells and Count Bernadotte belonged to the pre-Israel era.) Miss Utley and Reverend Elson are the latest additions to this long list of smeared people whose name is legion and who illustrate a new trend of using antisemitism by Jewish nationalistic fanatics for their ideological and political purposes.

What Makes an "Antisemite"?

A closer look at these "antisemites" will reveal one peculiarity common to all of them: — They all criticize Israel's handling of the Arab refugees. They all challenge Israel's contention that the rendering homeless of a million Palestinian Arab is merely an incident of war. They question the moral rights of any government, be it Israel or any other state, to make homeless one group of people who had lived on a soil for centuries in order to make room for another group of homeless people alleged to have a "historic right" to the land. To these people this is a moral not a political problem. They are moved by a strong sense of justice and moral conscience. It was this same conscience and sense of justice which moved many thousands of Christians like them to come to the aid of the Jews when they were persecuted by the Nazis that compels them now to come to the aid of the Arab refugees who, they believe, are victims of an injustice.

Like all men possessed of conscience, these people cannot be silenced as easily as poli-

ticians are. They are not afraid to say what they believe to be true, even if this leads to their being smeared with the ugliest abomination of the age. The fact is that these "antisemites" have learned the superior lesson of the Great Book which the Jews have taught the Western world for centuries. For they chose to follow the call for justice of the Prophets, while the Israelis reverted back to the earlier Biblical period of Joshua and the barbaric conquest of Canaan.

It is a tragic irony of fate that the People of the Book, the "rhosen" race of priests and teachers of justice, who for centuries prided themselves on their mission to introduce morality into religion, now repudiate their own contribution to Christian civilization, and glorify a new pagan religion of trihallam and force, while their Christian pupils have remained true to the original teaching and are crying out against injustice. And for this they are called "antisemites."

— william zukerman